

ABEL JOHN EVANS.

Biography from the Lehi Centennial History

Abel John Evans was born December 20, 1852, at Lehi City, Utah, being the son of Abel Evans and Mary Jones Evans. At the age of twelve years his father went on a mission to Great Britain, and in November, 1867, died there, thus becoming a martyr for the cause of his Master, and leaving Abel John the eldest of nine children to take the lead in all the hardships which the people of that time were forced to undergo.

He had had but very little time to go to school, and indeed the opportunities of those days were but poor for those able to go. He worked on the farm and in the canyons, and at other manual labor, such as he could find to do.

At the age of 21 years, on January 26, 1874, he was ordained to the office of an elder, under the hands of Andrew Smith Johnson, and was married the same day to Louisa Emeline Zimmerman, in the Endowment House at Salt Lake City, Utah. He afterwards became the father of eleven children, three boys and eight girls, seven of whom are still living, namely: Harriet Mindwell (Mrs. Heber Webb), William Erastus, Robert James, Rose Ethel (Mrs. Angus Elmer Peterson), Hazel Julia (Mrs. George F. Holmstead), Vervene June, and Winifred Erma.

Soon after becoming an elder, he was chosen as one of the counselors to Lott Russon, who was president of the elders' quorum at Lehi; on December 30, 1883, was ordained to the office of a seventy under the hands of Andrew A. Peterson; and in April, 1889, went on a mission to Great Britain. On January 15, 1893, he was ordained a high priest, under the hands of Abraham H. Cannon, one of the apostles of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and called to the High Council in the Utah Stake of Zion. He acted in that position until the Alpine Stake of Zion was organized, on January 13, 1901, at which time he was made one of the stake presidency, the position he now occupies, having been set apart by

Apostle Teasdale.

In the industrial line, Mr. Evans has always been a strong advocate of home industry and local institutions, being a stockholder in the following companies: Provo Woolen Mills, Utah-Idaho Sugar Company, Utah Banking Company, State Bank of Lehi, Bank of American Fork, American Fork Co-op., Intermountain Life Insurance Company, Provo Reservoir Company, Utah Lake Irrigation Company, Salt Lake & Utah Railroad Company, and many other minor enterprises.

Mr. Evans was a member of the City Council four terms, 1881-1888; during the last three terms was alderman, which included the duties of justice of the peace, and in 1891 was elected mayor, this time running on a Democratic ticket, being the first election since the division of the people on national party lines. He has always been a strong Democrat in politics. He served as a member of the county court for four years, 1892-1896, at which time he was elected a member of the Utah Constitutional Convention and there took a prominent part in framing the state constitution. He served as a senator in the first, second, third, and fourth State Legislatures of the State of Utah, and at the last session was chosen president of the senate by the unanimous vote of his party.

Although Mr. Evans had very few educational opportunities in his youth, by determination and study, pursued at odd times, he has risen into the ranks of professional men. Although he never attended a high school nor a law school a day in his life, yet on May 13, 1901, he was the happy recipient of a certificate from the Supreme Court of the State of Utah, which entitles him to practice law in all of the courts of the State.